



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **PLETCHER DERBY, OAKS CONTENDERS WORK FRIDAY MORNING**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, April 22, 2022)** – Derby season is here and Churchill Downs was bustling with excitement Friday morning as 10 Derby and Oaks contenders logged their penultimate work prior to the first weekend in May. Half of those workers were from Hall of Fame trainer **Todd Pletcher's** barn – Oaks contenders **Goddess of Fire** (five furlongs, 1:00.80); **Nest** (four furlongs, :49.80); and **Shahama** (five furlongs, 1:00.80) and Derby contenders **Charge It** (five furlongs, 1:00.40) and **Mo Donegal** (four furlongs, :50.20).

Other Derby and Oaks contenders that worked Friday were **Barber Road** (six furlongs, 1:16.40); **Beguine** (five furlongs, 1:01); **Cocktail Moments** (five furlongs, 1:01.20); **Turnerloose** (five furlongs, 1:01.20) and **Zozos** (six furlongs, 1:12.40).

The Pletcher squad began their works at 6 a.m. (all times Eastern) with the trio of Oaks breezes. **Red Oak Stable's** Gulfstream Park Oaks (GII) runner-up Goddess of Fire worked on the inside of **KHK Racing's** UAE Oaks (GIII) winner Shahama through fractions of :13.20, :25.60 and :37.40. The duo galloped out six furlongs in 1:13.20 and completed seven furlongs in 1:26. Their stablemate, **Repole Stable, Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners** and **Michael House's** recent Ashland (GI) heroine Nest, worked an easy half-mile outside of **Inventing** through eighth-mile clockings of :13.20, :25.40 and :37.80. They galloped out five furlongs in 1:02.60.

"Nest went a nice half in about :50 and galloped out nicely," Pletcher said. "We were looking for a little bit more from Goddess of Fire and Shahama. Goddess of Fire hasn't run since the Fair Grounds Oaks and Shahama hasn't run since the UAE Oaks. So, we were looking for a little bit of a stronger work from them. They galloped out well and I was pleased with how they went."

About 90 minutes later, Pletcher's Derby duo of **Whisper Hill Farm's** Florida Derby (GI) runner-up Charge It and **Donegal Racing's** Wood Memorial (GII) winner Mo Donegal worked in separate sets. Charge It was the first of the two to work and went in company outside **Cezanne** through fractions of :12, :25.40, :37.60. They galloped out six furlongs in 1:12.80 and seven furlongs in 1:25. Charge It completed his move with a one-mile time of 1:38.60. Mo Donegal breezed outside of **My Prankster** through composed early fractions of :13 and :26.20. They galloped out five furlongs in 1:02.20.

"With Charge It, we were looking for a good, solid breeze," Pletcher said. "He went a minute and four-fifths with a super big gallop out. We were really happy with that. With Mo Donegal, with the Wood just 13 days ago, we were just looking for an easy half in :50. He had a nice gallop out as well. All the horses got over the track well. The track still had a little moisture in it from yesterday but they all handled it well."

Jockey **Irad Ortiz Jr.** was at Churchill Downs to work both Nest and Mo Donegal on Friday for Pletcher.

"Nest is improving race by race," Ortiz said. "We really loved her since Day 1. Hopefully, we can get lucky that day. Mo Donegal is a really good horse. He is nice and quiet. He does everything we ask him to do. It looks like he should like the distance. It shouldn't be a problem with him. With a mile-and-a-quarter for 3-year-olds, he's the type of style you want for that day."

Pletcher's third Derby contender, **Pioneer of Medina**, galloped at 8:15 a.m.

At 7:30 a.m., **WSS Racing's** Arkansas Derby (GI) runner-up Barber Road worked solo with jockey **Reylu Gutierrez** in the saddle. The son of **Race Day** easily galloped through opening splits of :13.60, :26.60, :39.60 and :51.80. He completed his seven-furlong gallop out in 1:29.

Shortly before Barber Road worked, **Barry and Joni Butzow's** TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby (GII) runner-up Zozos breezed with jockey **Florent Geroux** in the saddle outside of stablemate **Fulsome** through swift quarter-mile times of :24 and :48.40. The duo galloped out around the clubhouse through seven furlongs in 1:25.20.

"It was another really strong move," trainer **Brad Cox** said. "He galloped out really well around the turn and is really doing well over this track. He's a quick horse as he showed in the Louisiana Derby but he settles into his works nicely."

Twenty minutes following Zozo's move, Cox also worked **Ike** and **Dawn Thrash's** Rachel Alexandra (GII) winner Turnerloose five furlongs in 1:01.20 inside of Grade I-winner **Juju's Map**.

Saturday is expected to be another busy morning at Churchill Downs. Arkansas Derby (GI) winner **Cyberknife** is slated to work at 5:15 a.m. Other known Derby and Oaks workers include **Smile Happy**, **Tiz the Bomb** and **Un Ojo**.

Friday at 6 p.m., "**Inside Churchill Downs**" will cover the Friday morning works along with give fans an update on the latest Derby and Oaks news and notes. Fans can listen live on ESPN 680/105.7 in the Louisville area or online at [www.espnlouisville.com](http://www.espnlouisville.com).

Saturday is the first morning for the exclusive Oaks/Derby training window from 7:30-7:45 a.m. Fans can watch the livestream on the Kentucky Derby's social media channels.

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**DAWN AT THE DOWNS: DERBY, OAKS MORNING WORKOUTS OPEN TO PUBLIC** – Between Saturday, April 23 and Wednesday, May 4, Churchill Downs will be open free-of-charge daily from 7-10 a.m. so guests can watch the nation's top 3-year-old Thoroughbreds train toward their engagements in this year's Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks.

Horses train on Churchill Downs' main track daily from 5:15-10 a.m. Beginning Saturday, there will be an exclusive training window only for Derby and Oaks participants from 7:30-7:45 a.m. following the 7-7:30 a.m. renovation break. Those horses will be identified by special saddle towels which include their names: yellow saddle towels for Derby horses and pink saddle towels for Oaks contenders.

Kentucky Derby Morning Works presented by TwinSpires.com will begin Monday and air on [www.kentuckyderby.com/works](http://www.kentuckyderby.com/works), Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Fans in attendance will be able to watch the show on the track's Big Board and infield televisions. The first two days of Kentucky Derby and Oaks training (Saturday and Sunday) also will be livestreamed on the Kentucky Derby's social media channels, but without commentary.

Guests can enter Churchill Downs through the Paddock Gate and should park for free in the nearby White Lot for convenient entry. Guests will be directed to Sections 115-117 to watch the morning workouts.

No outside food and beverage is allowed. Churchill Downs' Paddock Grill will be open each morning with breakfast food and beverage options.

Also, the Churchill Downs Store will be open daily featuring all of the best official race merchandise, collectibles, drinkwear, party supplies, gifts, apparel and gear for men and women in advance of the Kentucky Derby.

On Sunday, May 1 and Monday, May 2, fans can enjoy a premium breakfast in Millionaires Row or the Stakes Room for Dawn at the Downs. Tickets start at \$41 and can be purchased on [www.KentuckyDerby.com/tickets](http://www.KentuckyDerby.com/tickets).

The 148<sup>th</sup> runnings of the \$1.25 Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) and \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) will be held Friday, May 6 and Saturday, May 7, respectively. Opening Night of Derby Week and the 44-day Spring Meet is Saturday, April 30.

#### **ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK**

Churchill Downs Racetrack ("CDRT"), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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